

CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND

... Fighting Child Abuse and Neglect in Michigan

The Michigan Children's Trust Fund

... is a statewide organization with 71 local councils covering most of Michigan's counties whose sole purpose is to prevent child abuse in Michigan.

Every 5 Minutes...

Every 5 minutes a child in Michigan is reported victim of abuse and neglect. More than 350 possible cases of child abuse and neglect are reported each day in the state. Statistics and experience tell us that many more go unreported.

A Sad Picture of Abuse and Neglect

More than 87 percent of these children were abused or neglected by a parent and 80 percent of the incidents took place within their home.

Even sadder, the statistics suggest that regardless of age, gender, race, or family income, all children are potential victims.

A Continuing Cycle

Perhaps the most tragic aspect of child abuse and neglect is that the pattern continues when victims become parents themselves. Parents who were abused as children tend to inflict the same physical, emotional, and psychological damage on their children.

A Lifetime of Suffering

Suffering does not necessarily end when abuse or neglect stops. Abused and neglected children are far more likely to become involved in crime, including violent crime. Today's abuse and neglect inflicts a devastating toll on victims and society for untold years.

Reversing the Tide

The tide of abuse and neglect can be turned back. Community programs can prevent as high as **85 percent** of child abuse and neglect in families taking advantage of the support services available to them. But support services and prevention programs must be made available to more families if we are to reverse the tide.

Children's Trust Fund is working hard to ensure that thousands of Michigan's children and their parents live better lives. There is no better way to safeguard the future of our society and our state.

A Growing National Epidemic

- Between 1976 and 1994, the number of children suspected as being victims of abuse or neglect rose from 677,000 to 3,140,000 – an increase of 463 percent.
- Nearly four children each day, or about 1,300 per year, die from abuse and neglect.
- Children under two years of age are more likely to die from abuse than from car accidents, drowning, or fires.
- A conservative estimate is that one out of every five children will suffer abuse or neglect before his or hers 18th birthday.

***Your support can make a difference in a child's life.
Won't you join us today?***

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AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY: The Rising Tide of Child Abuse and Neglect

Trusting by nature, children believe us when we say that we will take care of them, keep them safe and protect them from harm. The sad reality is that, despite their best intentions, parents and caregivers do not always have the skills, resources, or maturity to respond to the trust that their children place in them.

Child abuse and neglect have reached startling levels in the United States. Experts describe it as a national epidemic.

- Since 1993, child abuse and neglect reports have not declined.
- Nearly four children a day, or about 1,300, children, die from abuse and neglect.
- Two thirds of all reported victims are young children (age six and younger.)
- One out of every five children will be abused or neglected by the time he or she turns 18.
- Child abusers are most often a family member such as the father, stepfather, mother's boyfriend, or an uncle or other male relative.

"Children in our nation are like the canaries miners used to test air before they went underground. How they fare is a good indication of how we rate as a society."
Meredith Wiley, Author
Ghosts in the Nursery

Long-term Consequences

Abuse and neglect have serious consequences that reach far beyond the individual child and families. Victims of child abuse and neglect are at significantly higher risk for problems throughout their lives. These risks include:

- ❑ Mental illness
- ❑ Substance abuse
- ❑ Behavioral disorders
- ❑ Suicide
- ❑ Disabilities
- ❑ Teen pregnancy
- ❑ Poor academic performance
- ❑ Domestic violence
- ❑ Delinquency
- ❑ Criminal violence
- ❑ Depression

Barry, a young father, saw the mother of his four had a drug problem and was neglecting the children. He wanted to take custody and turned to Kalamazoo County's Brother-to-Brother program, which encourages and helps fathers to care for their children. Brother-to Brother provides parenting education, monthly support groups and advocacy in the probate courts. As a result of his involvement in the program, he was able to gain custody of his children. Barry says, "This program has provided me with the tools to be a good father and provide a stable home for my children."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: The Michigan's Children's Trust Fund

The Michigan Children's Trust Fund (CTF) is a statewide not-for-profit organization with 70 local councils covering most of Michigan's counties whose sole purpose is to prevent child abuse in Michigan.

CTF's mission is to serve as a voice for all children and families to promote their health, safety, and welfare by supporting and funding effective collaborative programs and services that prevent child abuse and neglect.

The Michigan Children's Trust Fund is Michigan's Chapter of **Prevent Child Abuse America** (PCA), the leading national organization for the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Established in 1982 by the Michigan Legislature, the Trust Fund operates under the leadership of a fifteen member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor of Michigan. Ten members are appointed to three-year terms by the Governor. The other Board members represent the state departments of Community Health, Education, the Family Independence Agency, and the State Police.

Responsibilities of the Board include:

- Develop a state plan for the prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Allocate resources
- Oversee and monitor expenditures
- Provide public awareness and education programs
- Evaluate performance
- Make budget and policy recommendations to the Governor

"If we know that 85% of all child abuse and neglect can be prevented... there is no reason it shouldn't be. I believe each of us can do something to make that a reality."

— Pamela Posthumous
CTF Board of Directors

TURNING BACK THE TIDE: Community Partnerships

The problem of child abuse and neglect is serious, widespread, and growing in Michigan and across the nation. But we can turn back the tide. How? By giving parents and families the help they need, we prevent child abuse. It's that simple.

Yet, finding the way to get them help isn't always that simple. Neither is coordinating services from a variety of disciplines or encouraging collaboration among agencies that provide services to children and families. Adequately funding early intervention and prevention programs is also a challenge - a very big challenge.

As awareness and occurrence of child abuse grows, so too does the urgency for agencies across Michigan to work together to build communities that are caring and supportive of families needing help.

The Children's Trust Fund pursues and supports efforts that develop broad community responses to child abuse and neglect. CTF does this through its network of local councils and by providing direct funding to community programs throughout Michigan.

Three teen parents – Rhonda, Holly, and Alicia – recently spoke about how the Teen outreach Program enhancement Project helped them become better parents and high school graduates instead of dropouts. All three have gone on to further education and are working. Thanks to the Genesee Intermediate School District program, they were able to stay in school and get the educational foundation that will allow them and their children to have a bright future.

The Fund works in partnership with its 70 local councils to serve 79 of Michigan's 83 counties. Local councils are independent, community-based organizations that identify needs and facilitate collaborative prevention programs for children and families in their community.

In addition to the financial support it provides to local councils statewide, CTF

awards grants to direct service providers across the state that provide the following types of support services to families:

- Teen Parenting Support Programs
- Early Childhood Development Awareness Programs
- Parent Education
- Respite Care
- Referral Services
- Home Visitation
- Public Awareness Campaigns, such as **Never Shake a Baby**, and In Michigan, **We Love Our Kids** campaigns

In awarding grants, CTF's Board of Directors evaluate a number of factors, including the quality and type of program, community needs, consumer involvement, community collaboration, and geographic distribution of the funds. One of CTF's goals is to support as many qualified programs as possible, while developing a statewide community-based prevention system.

Research has proven that for every \$1 spent on prevention, \$19 is saved in crisis-oriented programming such as foster care, protective services, special education, low-birth weight babies, counseling and other such costs.

MSU Study for CTF, 1992

Another goal is to have these programs become self-sufficient. Grants typically serve as "start-up" funds with future funding coming from a variety of sources. Local match funds or in-kind services must equal at least half of the Children's Trust Fund grant. Programs are funded for multiple years on a declining funding basis. Funding priorities are:

- Primary and secondary prevention services (rather than treatment services)
- New programs and services, enhanced or expanded services, or services coordination
- Services to families that do not have an active Protective Services case

Since 1982, Children's Trust Fund has raised over \$60 million to support prevention programs and services in communities across the state, positively touching the lives of over 7 million children and families.

CHARTING THE COURSE: Goals for the 21st Century

Children's Trust Fund, however, is not about compiling statistics; it is about helping children and families. It is about creating safe and nurturing homes and communities in which all children can grow and flourish.

To ensure that all Michigan's children, present and future, live free from the fear of abuse and neglect, the Board of Directors has developed and implemented an aggressive plan to guide CTF at the beginning of the 21st century. The Board's plans focus on a number of key areas, including:

- Develop an overall prevention strategy for Michigan
- Raise the public's awareness about child abuse and neglect and the need to report all suspected cases
- Increase awareness of Children's Trust Fund and its work
- Increase the use of technology statewide to fight abuse and neglect
- Strengthen local councils and foster greater collaboration with community groups and other prevention partners
- Expand funding sources for CTF's prevention activities

STAND TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN

Much is being done to prevent child abuse and neglect, yet Michigan and other states must do more. As long as a single child is abused or neglected, this struggle cannot end.

No study can gauge the human toll that abuse and neglect inflict on these children. Most physical injuries will heal in time. The emotional and psychological injuries can last a lifetime, leaving victims to ask time and again: *Why was I hurt so badly by those who were supposed to love and protect me?*

There is no good answer.

The Children's Trust Fund is working for the day when no child has to ask that question.

Every step we take toward that goal will improve the quality of life for children, families, and communities and will provide a better future for everyone in Michigan.

"I feel that every new mother should have the opportunity to have this program available to them. We need more programs like this. If we did maybe our children would be raised the right way and the world would be a better and safer place."

Anonymous Client. Starfish Family Services

Children's Trust Fund relies on the generous support of individuals, foundations, community organizations, and corporations to provide financial support for its prevention programs that address child abuse and neglect.

***The children of Michigan trust you
to keep them safe.
Your gift to the Children's Trust Fund sustains that trust.***